

Position in BALANCE OF TRADE.

The Government Statist has for some time past been moving in this direction and has already accumulated much useful data as to our Interstate Trade which is set forth in the Report by the Government Statist. Very substantial excesses of exports over imports are shown in the case of such articles as Wheat, Wool, and Brandy £1,000,000; Motor Cars £1,000,000; Wheat, Wool, and Flour £750,000; Sheep and Hides £150,000; and Iron Ore £500,000. A substantial export trade is also done in the case of the Commonwealth. Since the year 1910 when the Commonwealth Authorities ceased to keep the complete records of Interstate Trade, the States have been considerably handicapped by not being able to ascertain whether their Grand Total Trade actually results in a credit or debit balance. The Oversea Trade Balances are known but not the Interstate. There is annually a considerable volume of trade between States not only in the products of the Commonwealth but also in the movement of Overseas goods from State to State.

The State Governments of Western Australia and Tasmania passed special Acts, under the authority of which the statisticians of those States have been able to collect and record the quantity and value of the trade of their States with other parts of the Commonwealth. These two States are therefore able to obtain reasonably correct Trade Balances. To pointedly illustrate the adverse effect of the absence of this information, the overseas Trade for the last three years may be noted for New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. These are:-

Butter £340,418 (22,848); Cheese £278,947 (224,995); Bacon and Ham £165, Three Years Overseas Trade Balances, 1924-25 to 1926-27. £360,453 (26,022); Agricultural Implements £22,000 (22,000); Metal Manufactures £69,355 (241,073); Leather and Leather Manufactures £27,235 (27,235); Soap £20,000 (20,000); Glass and Pottery £24,000 (24,000); Silk £22,045 (22,045); Hides £185,000 (215,347); Wool £224,045 (224,045); Iron and Steel £113,000 (213,000).

State	Excess Imports	Excess Exports
New South Wales	£21,918,000	-
Victoria	50,888,000	- 7601
Queensland	6-4	25,431,564
South Australia		12,288,295
		239,088

It is well known that both New South Wales and Victoria are the medium of circulating to other States large quantities of Overseas Imports and it is a distinct handicap that the volume of the business between States has been unknown for so many years, for if taken into account the overseas trading balances of the States certainly would be considerably modified. Taking Western Australia where such transfer trade is recorded by special Act, it is noted that nearly £1,000,000 of overseas goods are received in Western Australia via other States.

The Statisticians of the States other than Western Australia and Tasmania, which have overcome the trouble, have had the subject before them for some time and after detail discussion at the recent Statistical Conference it was agreed to make an effort to obtain information regarding a number of leading articles of Interstate Trade by the aid of Railway and Harbor Departmental Records and the courtesy of Importers and Exporters. Towards this end a selection of about 20 products to begin with will be decided upon.

Position in South Australia. The Government Statist has for some time past been moving in this direction and has already accumulated much useful data as to our Interstate Trade which indicates definitely that this State does a fairly substantial export trade to other States, past follows:- or Wine and Brandy £1,000,000; Motor Boats £2,000,000; Wheat, Barley and Flour £750,000; Bark and Salt £145,000; and Iron Ore £600,000. A substantial export trade is also done in Metal Manufactures, Cheese, Soap, Bacon and Ham, Jams, Leather, Gypsum &c.

Not much information is available as yet regarding Imports, but Coal and Sugar would total approximately £2,000,000. less exports of same to Broken Hill and Western Australia. Apparels and Attire would probably be a heavy item, also Livestock and Wool. Timber from Western Australia in 1926-27 was valued at £341,303.

Trade with Western Australia. In this State complete records are kept of Interstate Trade. A review of these has been made and the results should be informative to the local traders doing business with that State. For the year 1926-27 Western Australia imported from the States £8,929,028 of which this State contributed £1,058,877 or 12%. Can not this proportion be increased in view of the closer geographical position? With this objective, the products of trade have been reviewed and some are set forth as follows with the S.A. proportion in parentheses:-

Butter £540,418 (£8,848); Cheese £78,947 (£24,595); Bacon and Ham £165,861 (£28,298); Sugar £597,741 (£42,606); Boots and Shoes £360,463 (£26,282); Agricultural Implements £645,056 (£102,360); the Metal Manufactures £69,335 (£41,073); Leather and Leather Manufactures £87,538 (£21,728); Soap £48,185 (£12,424); Pickles and Sauces £49,798 (£4,572); Ale and Beer £27,930 (£5,448); Jams and Jellies £166,608 (£16,045); Malt £24,046 (£11,269); Raisins £22,471 (£13,642); Glass and Glassware £22,701 (£6,202).

In many of the foregoing items this State might probably secure a greater proportion of the business. In the following items this State supplies either the total trade or nearly so:-

Eggs in pulp £10,879; Motor car bodies £86,100; Brandy £8,778 (Total £9,189); Salt £4,411 (Total £5,202); Wine still £69,265-17 (Total £73,192).

The balance of trade with Western Australia was in favor of this State for 1926-27 by £489,335.

(2) The value of the production of the State increased from 1911-12 to £41,134,716 in 1926-27, an increase of 25.6% or £32.162.  
 (3) Gross Quantity Production. When, however, the quantity production is calculated per inhabitant the increase is indicated to be approximately 10%, indicating very little progress relative to population.  
 Statistical Office, Adelaide, 16th February, 1928.

(4) Graph 6. The trend of prices for the 18 years is indicated by the broken curve and the quantity production per inhabitant by the continuous heavy curve. These give a ready impression of fluctuations for the whole period. It will be noticed that the curve representing quantity production remains fairly even from 18 to date.